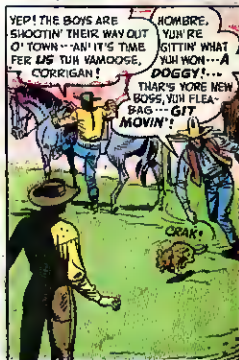


The HOODED HORSEMAN

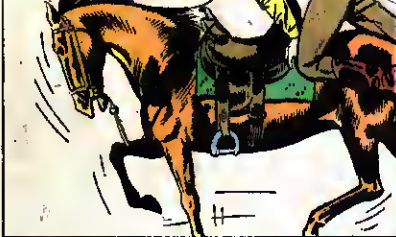




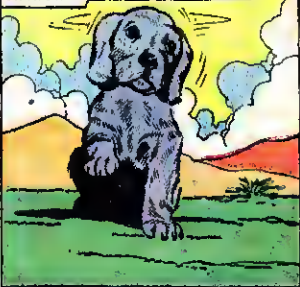
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AS THE TWO OUTLAWS GALLOP OFF...

JUMPIN' JIMSON... THOSE VARMINTS HAVE BEEN UP TUN SOME-THIN! CORRIGAN'S RODED WAS JEST A BLIND TUN LURE ALL BUT ONE MAN OUT O' TOWN... PA!



FOR JUST A SECOND, THE ABANDONED PUP TURNS WITH A PUZZLED WHINE FROM CORRIGAN, SPEEDING IN ONE DIRECTION, TO BUD, RIDING THE OTHER WAY...



THAT... HE MAKES HIS CHOICE!

SOUNDS MIGHTY QUIET BACK IN TOWN! BUT THAT'S NO USE FRETtin'... PA'S PROBABLY GOT 'EM BEHIND BARS BY NOW!



MINUTES LATER...

PA! THOSE POLECATS GOT YUH!

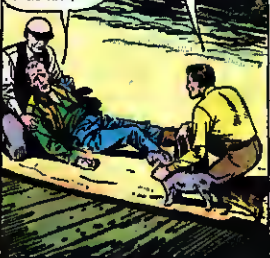
GOOD THING YUH GOT HERE, BUD! THE SHERIFF'S JEST ABOUT READY TUN HEAD OFF ON A LONG TRAIL... FER KEEPS!



BUD... I ALWAYS FIGGERED IT'D BE ENOUGH TUN TEACH YUH TUN RIDE LIKE A BLUE STREAK, AN' TUN LIVE SQUARE-- BUT I RECKON THIS PROVES I WAS **WRONG**! YUH'VE NEVER PACKED SIX-GUNS BEFORE-- BUT HEBBE **NOW** YUH'LL GAWY WHY I WANT YUH TUN TOTE **AMNE**! LEARN TUN USE 'EM, SON... **FER THE LAW!**



I SHORE WISH--- I WASN'T LEAVIN' YUH ---ALONE IN THE WORLD! YUH'RE GOIN' TUN HAVE A TOUGH TIME-- FIGHTIN' YORE WAY!



DON'T WORRY YORE SELF, PA! I'VE FOUND MYSELF A FRIEND ---AN' WE'RE GOIN' TUN LEARN TUN FIGHT OUR WAY **TOGETHER!**

SLOWLY, THE SHERIFF OF ALESA CITY TURNS HIS HEAD TOWARD THE SETTING SUN... AND HIS LAST BREATH FADES OFF!

HE'S--- **GONE, PUP!** THE BEST PARD I EVER HAD-- THE SQUAREST SHOOTIN' HOWBIE I EVER MET-- AH! I'LL NEVER FORGIT HIM!

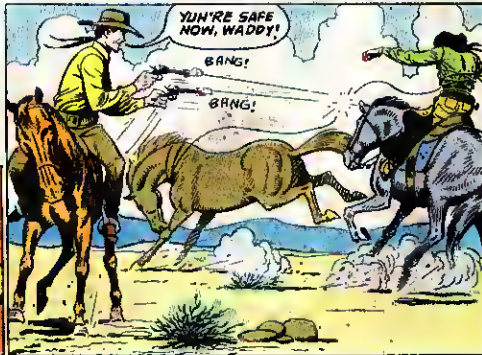
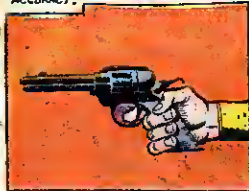




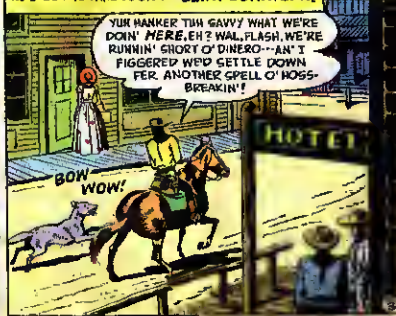
YES... A LOW GROWL ANSWERED THE SOUND OF THE HATED NAME! IN ONE HOUR OF VIOLENCE, EASY-GOING BUD FRASER HAS CHANGED TO A WADDY WITH DANGER IN HIS SEARCHING STRIDE... AN UNWANTED PUPPY HAS BECOME A DOG WITH A FRIEND! FROM NOW ON, THEY'LL SHARE WHAT-EVER THEY FIND... GOOD FORTUNE AND BITTER STRUGGLES... A PASS-ING "HOWDY!" FOR HADDIES MET ON THE WAY... AND A PAY-OFF FOR SLIM CORRIGAN!

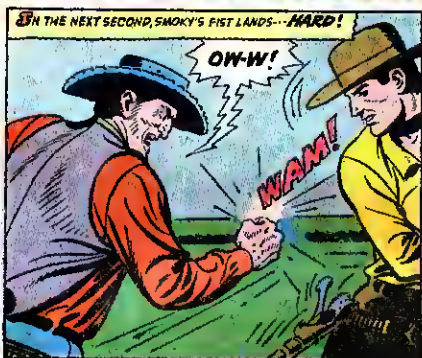
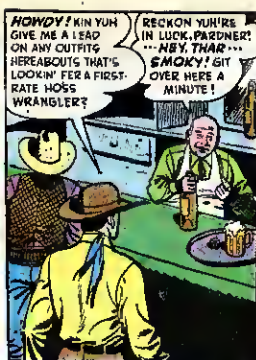


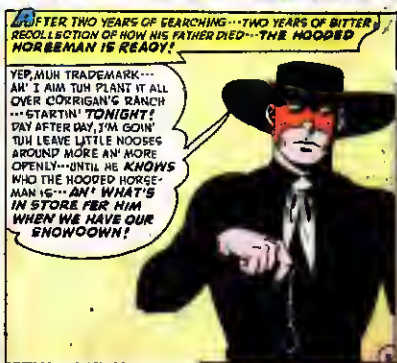
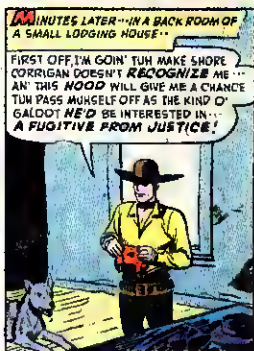
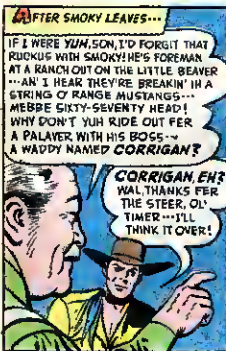
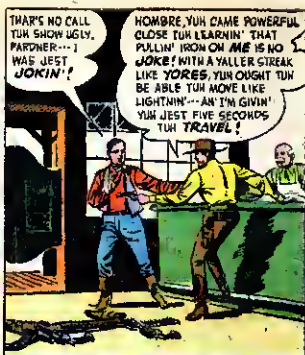
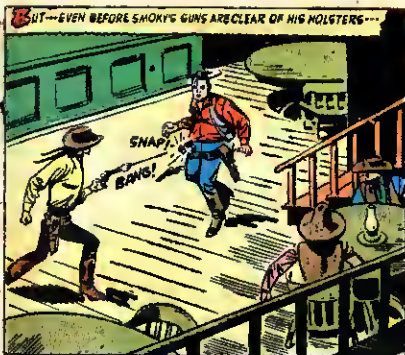
TWO YEARS PASS... TWO YEARS OF RUGGED ADVENTURE THAT HAVE MADE BUD A TOP-NOTCH BROWNBUSTER WHO CAN MASTER ANY-THING WITH FOUR HOOFES... AND FLASH A HUNDRED POUNDS OF FANG AND MUSCLE! BUT THAT'S NOT ALL THAT LIES AHEAD FOR SLIM CORRIGAN! THERE'S A PAIR OF NOTCHED "H" THAT USED TO BE PACKED BY THE SHERIFF OF MESA CITY... GUNS THAT CAN BE DRAWN AND COCKED IN A SINGLE SWEEP OF THE HANDS... AND AIMER WITH STEEL-NERED ACCURACY!



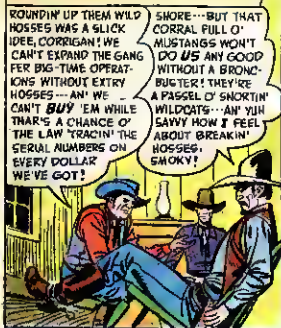
BUT BUD NEVER STICKS AT A JOB FOR MORE THAN A FEW MONTHS! THERE'S ONE THOUGHT THAT KEEPS HIM ON THE MOVE... ONE QUARRY HE'S GOT TO TRACK DOWN... SLIM CORRIGAN!







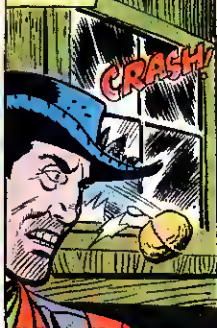
THAT NIGHT... AT THE CORRIGAN RANCH...



ROUNDIN' UP THEM WILD HOSSES WAS A SLICK IDEA, CORRIGAN! WE CAN'T EXPAND THE GANG FER BIG-TIME OPERATIONS WITHOUT EXTRY HOSSES... AN' WE CAN'T BUY 'EM WHILE THAR'S A CHANCE O' THE LAW 'TRACIN' THE SERIAL NUMBERS ON EVERY DOLLAR WE'VE GOT!

SMORE... BUT THAT CORRAL FULL O' MUSTANGS WON'T DO US ANY GOOD WITHOUT A BRONC-BUSTER! THEY'RE A PASSEL O' SNOORTIN' WILDOATS... AN' YUH SAVVY HOW I FEEL ABOUT BREAKIN' HOSSES, SMOKY!

SUDDENLY...



CRASH!

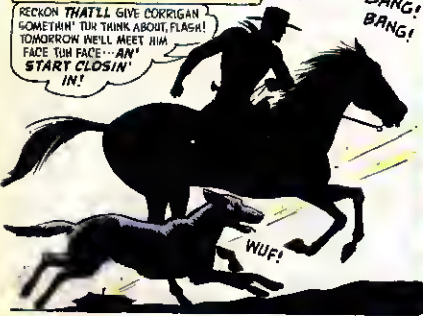
WHAR'D THIS COME FROM? WHO'S OUT THAR?

I CAN'T MAKE HIM OUT, CORRIGAN! HE'S RIDIN' OFF LIKE A STREAK!



AS THE HOODED HORSEMAN GALLOPS INTO THE DARKNESS THAT MATCHES HIS BLACK AND MENACING FORM...

RECKON THAT'LL GIVE CORRIGAN SOMETHIN' TUH THINK ABOUT, FLASH! TOMORROW WE'LL MEET HIM FACE TUH FACE... AN' START CLOSIN' IN!



BANG! BANG!

WUF!

NEXT DAY... A SHORT DISTANCE FROM THE RANCH...

YUH'D BETTER WAIT IN THE BRUSH, FLASH! I'LL HAVE A LOOK-SEE... AN' IF IT APPEARS I KIN PASS MUHSELF OFF IN THIS DISGUISE WITHOUT MAKIN' CORRIGAN SUSPICIOUS, I'LL WHISTLE FER YUH!



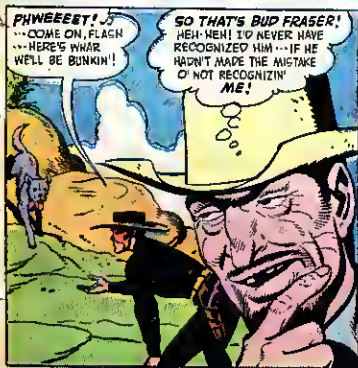
MINUTES LATER... HOWDY, THE BARTENDER BACK IN TOWN MENTIONED THAT ONE O' YUH PLUNCHERS TANGLED WITH A WADY WHO WAS A WHITE TOO FUGGY TUH BREAK HOSSES FER THE CORRIGAN OUTFIT! WAL... THAR'S A JOB THAT WAS MADE TUH ORDER FER ME!



THAT DEPENDS, HOMBRE! WHAT'S THE IDEA O' THAT FANCY GETUP?

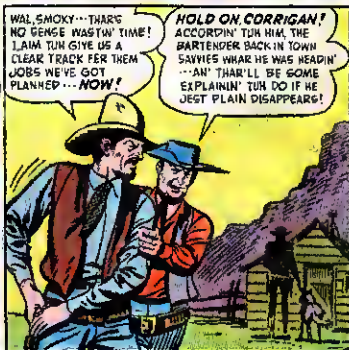
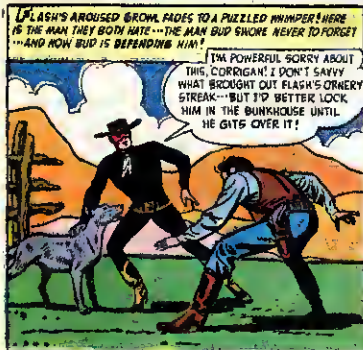
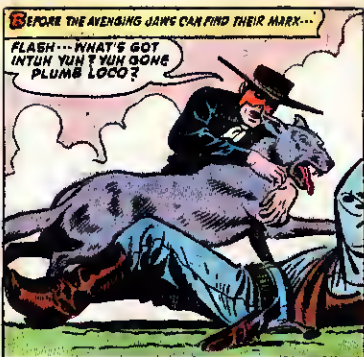
I'LL DO MUH EXPLAININ' TUH YORE BOSS! WHAR IS HE?



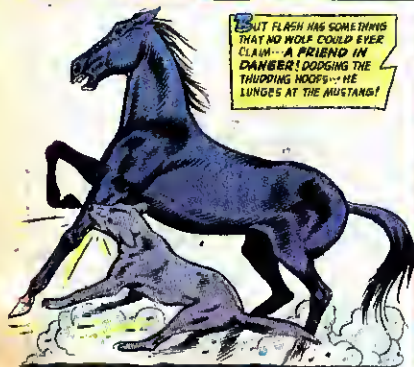
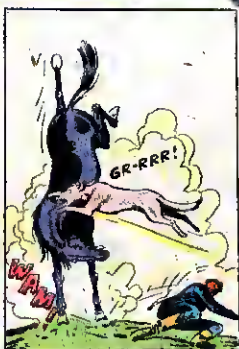
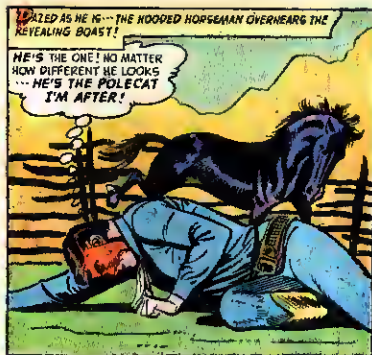


NO, THERE'S
NOTHING
RECOGNIZABLE
IN **SLIM**
CORRIGAN'S
CHANGED
FEATURES...
BUT THERE'S
SOMETHING
THAT HASN'T
CHANGED! IT'S
THE SCENT OF
A MAN WHO
DEALT OUT
QUIRT BLOWS
AND KICKS TO
A HALF-GROWN
PUP... **AND**
FLASH
REMEMBERS!

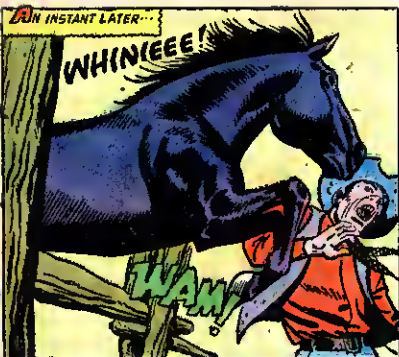








RUN INSTANT LATER...



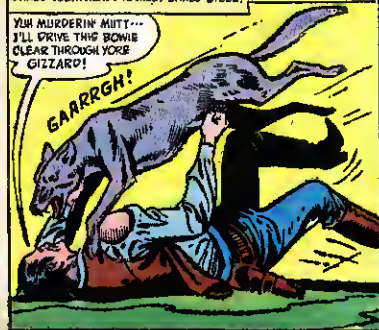
JACK... AS THE HOODED HORSEMAN RISES...



FOR TWO YEARS, FLASH AND BUD HAVE BEEN A TEAM... A TEAM THAT HAS LEARNED TO WORK TOGETHER... FAST!



FLASH SEES THE GLINTING KNIFE UPRAISED IN CORRIGAN'S HAND... BARED TEETH READY TO MEET BARED STEEL!



FLASH... HOLD IT! I'LL HANDLE THIS SKULKIN' COYOTE... GUARD THE OTHERS!



